

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable consideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7-10, 12, 13, 15-18 and 20-26 are presently pending in this application, Claims 1, 8, 12 and 15 having been amended by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-2, 4, 5, 7 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by JP 09-042595 (hereinafter "JP '595"); Claims 8, 12 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP '595 in view of Blair et al. (U.S. Patent 6,095,367); Claims 10, 13, 16 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP '595 in view of Taylor (U.S. Patent 7,093,337); Claims 9, 18 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP '595 in view of Blair et al. and Narita et al. (U.S. Publication 2004/0074949); Claims 21 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP '595 in view of Narita et al. and Klenk et al. (U.S. Publication 2004/0038094); Claims 23-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP '595 in view of Narita et al. and Faye et al. (U.S. Publication 2004/0033402).

Claims 1, 8, 12 and 15 have been amended for clarification. These amendments are believed to find support in the specification, claims and/or drawings as originally filed, and no new matter is believed to be added thereby. If, however, the Examiner disagrees, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned who will be happy to work in a joint effort to derive mutually satisfactory claim language.

Before addressing the rejections based on the cited references, a brief review of Claim 1 as currently amended is believed to be helpful. Claim 1 is directed to a pressure vessel liner and recites: "a tubular trunk having end openings at opposite ends of the trunk; a plurality of head plates joined to the trunk at the opposite ends and closing the end openings of the trunk,

respectively; and a reinforcing member fixedly provided in an interior space formed by the trunk and the head plates and dividing the interior space into a plurality of spaces, wherein the head plates are joined to the reinforcing member by friction agitation, at least one of the head plates is in the form of an outwardly bulging dome, and the reinforcing member has an end portion which projects beyond the trunk and is fitted to the form of the outwardly bulging dome of the at least one of the head plates.”

It is respectfully submitted that JP ‘595 does not teach or suggest “*a reinforcing member fixedly provided in an interior space formed by the trunk and the head plates and dividing the interior space into a plurality of spaces, wherein ... at least one of the head plates is in the form of an outwardly bulging dome, and the reinforcing member has an end portion which projects beyond the trunk and is fitted to the form of the outwardly bulging dome of the at least one of the head plates*” as recited in amended Claim 1 (emphasis added in italic).

More specifically, JP ‘595 simply describes a liner 2 where a circumferential wall member 3 and die-cast-worked end wall members 4, 5 are connected to each other by weld parts 6. The circumferential wall member 3 includes a cylindrical circumferential wall part 7 and a reinforcement rib part 8 connecting its inner circumferential surfaces to each other, and the reinforcement rib part 8 has three rib plates 9 radially disposed in a cross sectional surface, and pipes 10 connecting inner ends of these to each other. End wall members 4, 5 include an end wall part 11 of sphere form, a mouthpiece portion 12 which pierces through the central part of the end wall part 11, and the three rib parts 13 set up by the inner surface of the end wall part 11. A projection 13a which positions by entering into the inner circumference of the circumferential wall part 7 is formed in the end of the rib part 13. Weld parts 6 weld both the left and right ends of the circumferential wall part 7 of the circumferential wall member 3, and the periphery edge of the end wall part 11 of each end

wall members 4, 5.¹ As such, JP '595 fails to disclose that the end portion of the reinforcement rib part 8 is projecting beyond the circumferential wall part 7, nor does the reinforcement rib part 8 of JP '595 has a projecting end portion which is extended and fitted to the interior contour of the end wall part 11 of the end wall members 4, 5. Therefore, the structure recited in amended Claim 1 is believed to be clearly distinguishable from JP '595.

Likewise, Blair et al., Taylor, Narita et al., Klenk et al. and Faye et al. are not believed to teach or suggest “*a reinforcing member fixedly provided in an interior space formed by the trunk and the head plates and dividing the interior space into a plurality of spaces, wherein ... at least one of the head plates is in the form of an outwardly bulging dome, and the reinforcing member has an end portion which projects beyond the trunk and is fitted to the form of the outwardly bulging dome of the at least one of the head plates*” as recited in amended Claim 1 (emphasis added in italic), and the structure recited in amended Claim 1 is also believed to be distinguishable from Blair et al., Taylor, Narita et al., Klenk et al. and Faye et al.

Because none of Blair et al., JP '595, Taylor, Narita et al., Klenk et al. and Faye et al. discloses the structure as recited in amended Claim 1, their teachings even in combination are not believed to render the pressure vessel liner recited in Claim 1 obvious.

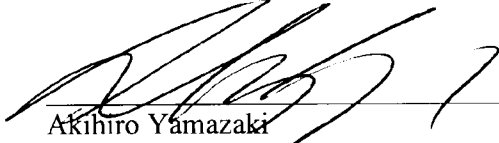
For the foregoing reasons, Claim 1 is believed to be allowable. Furthermore, since Claims 2, 4, 5, 7-10, 12, 13, 15-18 and 20-26 depend directly or indirectly from either Claim 1, substantially the same arguments set forth above also apply to these dependent claims. Hence, Claims 2, 4, 5, 7-10, 12, 13, 15-18 and 20-26 are believed to be allowable as well.

¹ See, for example, the attached English translation (machine translation) of JP '595, paragraphs 13-16.

In view of the amendments and discussions presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance, and an early action favorable to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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